

Lewis and Clark

Bicentennial Commemoration 2003-2006

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is pleased to participate in the Bicentennial Commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery expedition, 2003-2006. With offices in every state, and a presence in nearly every county in the U.S., NRCS will be involved in activities along the trail throughout the three-year celebration.

Leader in Private Lands Conservation

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

As the Nation's lead Federal agency addressing private lands conservation, NRCS provides technical assistance and offers a wide range of voluntary conservation programs.

Lewis and Clark and the First Soil Surveys of the American West

At the turn of the 19th century, the U.S. population was growing quickly, and there was concern that there might not be enough farmland to sustain the nation. President Jefferson instructed Lewis and Clark to report on the Western lands of the Louisiana Purchase and their potential for agricultural purposes.

NRCS was created in the 20th century to address similar interests. Jefferson's charge to Lewis and Clark reflected the need of a young nation to know and understand its natural resources. Today, NRCS helps people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment through local, state, and national partnerships.

While we have become an urban nation, we remain an agricultural land, and conserving private land for the purpose of production is just as important today as it was in 1803 when Lewis and Clark launched their remarkable expedition.

Commemorating the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Local NRCS staff and Resource Conservation and Development Councils will provide grass-roots efforts in communities along the historic trail in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. NRCS will provide information about the soil survey, snow survey, plant materials, and National Resources Inventory throughout the trail states. NRCS plans to provide backyard conservation and other conservation educational materials to tour and event participants to promote conservation activities by individuals. NRCS also will participate in educational conferences and workshops, bus tours, welcome centers, entertainment and fairs, and develop classroom materials.

A series of paintings commemorating the Lewis and Clark expedition were painted by an NRCS employee using only soil pigments. The paintings will be featured in posters and exhibits, and soil painting demonstrations will be offered.

For information about Earth Team volunteer opportunities, call 1-888-LANDCARE.

For more information about NRCS Lewis and Clark commemoration activities and conservation in your own backyard, visit the website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>.

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